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THE ELECTION CONNECTION

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 1

Poll Worker Newsletter

Pinellas County, Florida

SUMMER 1998

A WORD FROM OUR SUPERVISOR

Welcome back to Election Time!

Elections must be getting closer together; it just doesn't seem possible that the presidential election was two years ago.

So, are you ready? There are many new things happening this year at the polling place, the main one being **PHOTO ID**. Start spreading the word--both photo and signature ID will be required at the polling place this fall.

Classes are beginning for the 345 precincts (two new ones), and the countdown has begun. As always you carry the banner for my office. All of our work between elections is in vain unless you continue to do a good job on election day. Your attitude, your smile, and your efficiency are what voters are left thinking about as they exit the polling place. We cannot make your days shorter, but we have managed to make your pay better (still not as much as you deserve): see details in this newsletter.

So again, **I thank each of you** for the important role you play in the election process in our county. Without you, there would be no elections. Your time and involvement are truly appreciated by my office and by the voters (564,387 at this date).

Hang in there, smile, and be helpful and understanding. Most of all, enjoy your day.

Sincerely,



SCENT SENSITIVITY



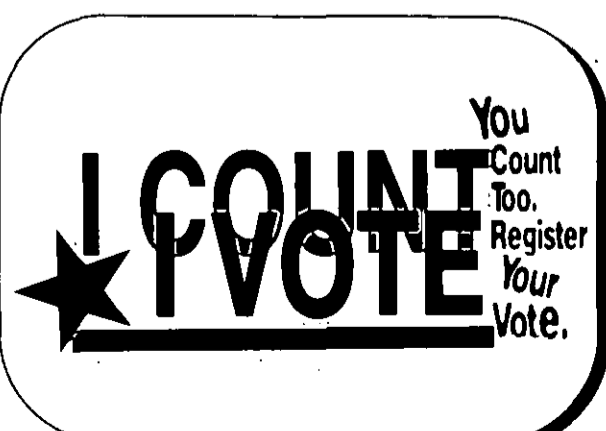
Our office has adopted a fragrance-free environment policy. Please refrain from wearing perfumes or colognes or scented after-shave to meetings and classes in our buildings. Those with severe allergies will appreciate your cooperation. Thank you.



NEW TEES WILL PLEASE AND SEVEN COUNTIES WILL "COUNT" IN CAMPAIGN '98

Remember the fun we had wearing "Ready Set Vote '96" T-shirts? We, along with six other counties, will soon be wearing new ones sporting the logo at right. These "tees" will be for sale at poll worker classes for those who wish to purchase them. Prices: M,L,XL \$5; XX \$6; XXX \$7. A cap to top it off will be \$5.

Campaign '98 includes seven counties in the Tampa Bay area that are cooperating to increase voter participation. Promotions, in addition to the T-shirts, include video billboards in 7-11 stores. Be sure to investigate your local 7-11 to see how "neat" it is!



DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

FIRST PRIMARY
Tuesday, September 1
Books close August 3

SECOND PRIMARY
***Thursday, October 1**
Books close August 31

GENERAL ELECTION
Tuesday, November 3
Books close October 5



BACK TO SCHOOL

POLL WORKER CLASSES for Sept. 1 and Oct. 1

You must attend a two-hour class between August 6-26.

You will receive a card in the mail.

POLL WORKER CLASSES for November 3

You must attend one class in October.

CLERKS

You must also attend a short class and pick up supplies on the day before each election:

August 31, September 30, November 2

* Date changed for religious holiday.

PRECINCT EXPLOSION



The population explosion is still happening in Pinellas County, and it will not surprise you that precinct explosion usually follows. Precincts # 633 and # 639 are currently being divided to create two new precincts, bringing our total to 345!! This means more new workers than ever before to be welcomed to our August classes.



REFLECTIONS . . .

CONNECTION'S GUEST COLUMN



Pinellas County Sheriff Everett S. Rice

It is a pleasure to have this opportunity to say thank you to so many citizens dedicated to the efficient oversight of our election process here in Pinellas County. You are the backbone of this system, and we appreciate your time and service to local voters.

Over many years, the Sheriff's Office and the Supervisor of Elections Office have formed a friendly working partnership to administer one of the signature rights of our democratic society--the right to vote. With your education and assistance we have been able to provide a secure and professional atmosphere where our citizens can exercise that right. On behalf of the members of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, thanks again for your good work, and we'll see you at the polls.



ELECTION CONFECTION

- 1 polling place
- 8 votomatics
- 1 box of ballots
- 6 great poll workers
- 1 dash of patience
- 1 sprig of patriotism

Start with polling place; add votomatics; stir in ballots (measuring carefully the number of potential voters and turnouts in similar election). Blend together: complex election laws, terrific workers, 13+ hours of serving voters, a dash of patience, a sprig of patriotism--and what do you get? The perfect polling place!

Dorothy Walker Ruggles
Supervisor of Elections
315 Court Street
Clearwater, Florida 33756

NEW STATUTES

Several statutes recently enacted by the legislature affect poll workers in the fall elections, such as **PICTURE ID**. Other changes will not have an impact on us until later, because they take effect in 1999. You will get the latest information when you come to your class in August. One of the reasons that experienced workers must continue to attend classes with every election is that there are always new challenges. (and the possibility that some of us are a bit rusty on the old challenges?)

Also, you may be aware that a large number of changes instituted by the legislature apply to procedures for absentee voting, but most of these do not affect us at the polling place.



POSITION ADDITION

Clerks, you will be pleased to know that you will have an assistant clerk for the general election in November! You will get the details about this at your October class.



INCREASE IN PAY WILL MAKE YOUR DAY



Great news!! Inspectors and deputies will be earning \$70 for election day, plus \$12 for attending class. Assistant clerks (November only) will receive \$80 plus \$12, and clerks will earn \$90, plus \$12 for each class including clerks' classes.

Other pay-related changes are as follows: no W-2s will be issued to poll workers; neither withholding tax nor FICA will be deducted from poll worker's paychecks; no unemployment compensation may be filed for poll workers; and retirees from the Florida Retirement System can not work for elections in any capacity for one full year after retirement without loss of benefits.

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